

# Interview with Mr. Kris Fitzgerald

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**Interviewee:** Mr. Kris Fitzgerald, CTO at NTT DATA Services

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**Summary:**

I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Kris Fitzgerald, the CTO at NTT DATA Services. NTT Data Services a branch of NTT data that primarily focuses on partnering with clients to navigate and simplify the modern complexities of business and technology, delivering insights, and solutions. Mr. Fitzgerald has many years of experience in the industry and has the opportunity to interact with upcoming technologies and connect innovations to customers. Through the interview, I was able to gain some exposure to different types of automation, learn more about Mr. Fitzgerald his current role and his background, and also get to hear his opinion on the future of technology.

**Interview:**

We first discussed Automation and the three main different types. Automation is the process of making a regular task that is traditionally done with a person or a series of systems and having a computer do it - automatically. The main types of automation we discussed were Autonomous scripted actions, Robotic Process Automation(software), and Virtual Agents. Each of these forms of automation allows humans to become more productive as it removes tedious processes and replaces with automated systems.

Autonomous scripted actions are preplanned actions that accomplish the intended objectives. They are implemented within applications to be activated when specific messages or conditions are met. For example, if a server noticed that particular timestamps would cause an error with the formatting for email archives instead of a person going through every email and manually fixing the setting on those emails the server could automatically apply those settings to the affected emails and fix it autonomously. These scripts can be created for various actions and reduce the human work required for numerous issues.

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Robotic Process Automation is useful for tasks that require the integration of multiple different applications. It is when there is a bot running on the computer/device and doing a repetitive function as if it was a human doing - just automatic. It is like a ghost controlling a machine. For example, if there was a collection of financial documents that had data that needed to be transferred into a spreadsheet and then into a CRM tool - a Robotic Process Automation could be used to move the data from one place to the next automatically. A Robotic Process would be a preferable solution to this scenario as having to create a separate tool, or system to integrate all the systems could be more expensive and may not be able to be completed in the given time restraints. The use of Robotic Process Automation allows a reduction in wasted human resources for tedious tasks with a reduced chance of error.

Virtual Agent automation is the idea of creating systems with contextual-cognition. Contextual-cognition is the ability for a system that is interacting with humans to be able to understand the context in which they are communicating - using conversations cues and not being confused by slang and indefinite pronouns. This automation will be incredibly impactful in the customer service industry as it will reduce the number of agents required as systems will now be able to help. For example, if a customer was wondering why their account was locked they would be able to call the method and just have a conversation with the virtual agent as it guided them through process of getting access back to their account - without having to go through any prompts asking them to "click '1' for help with account issues." Virtual Agent automation will allow systems in thousands of companies to become more intelligent reducing frustration and time wasted with contextually-unaware systems.

Overall, talking to Mr. Fitzgerald was a fantastic learning opportunity, as I was able to gain exposure to the data services industry. I also got the opportunity to get a better understanding of automation and a few different flavors. I learned about essential components in the technology industry and gained Mr. Fitzgerald's insight on where technology could be headed in the future and how it could change the jobs people have.